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New York

President: Mr. Razali ..... (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Agenda item 96 (*continued*)

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(b) Agenda for development

Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development (A/51/45)

The President: The Assembly has before it a report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development, document A/51/45, and a draft resolution which, for the time being, is contained in paragraph 7 of Part I of document A/AC.250/1.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): Allow me to express my great satisfaction at the conclusion of the work that will lead to the adoption of the Agenda for Development by the General Assembly. We are very grateful to you, Ambassador Razali, and to the Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassadors Mangoaela and Powles, as well as to their predecessors, for leading us to a successful and timely outcome. We are convinced that all of us have made a contribution to the Agenda for Development. We are pleased to acknowledge the important role played by all delegations and by the Secretariat in the final stages of the negotiations.

For many years, Brazil has stressed the importance of reaffirming in a single document the role of the United Nations in development. Development is, and should remain, one of the main priorities of this Organization, which also has also an overall mandate on peace and security issues. Brazil has been deeply involved in the Agenda for Development since its beginning. We fully supported the Group of 77 initiative to establish the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on this matter. After three years of deliberations, we have finally concluded our work.

The Agenda for Development speaks for itself, but it is always worthwhile to highlight briefly what it represents. It integrates the consensus agreements resulting from major United Nations conferences on development and, for the first time, provides a definition of development. It reaffirms the role of the United Nations in development and provides a framework for reforms in the economic and social fields. In other words, it puts United Nations reforms in the context of the implementation of international commitments on development. Finally, it demonstrates that, whatever differences among countries may persist, there is still a firm commitment by the international community to the realization of development and to the revitalization of the United Nations system in that field.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): Allow me to say a few words on the occasion of this important event marking the completion of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-

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READEX

ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development. Only a few days ago, there was a general uncertainty about whether negotiations in the Group could come to a successful conclusion, given their complexity. We were, however, confident that success was at hand because of your personal involvement, Mr. President, and we are grateful to you and to the two Co-Vice-Chairmen, whose firm hands in steering the negotiations meant the difference between success and failure. May I therefore commend Ambassador Percy Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand for a job well done. May I also refer to the laudable efforts of their predecessors, Ambassador Valéry Mongbé of Benin and Ambassador Peter Osvald of Sweden. It was during the Philippine chairmanship of the Group of 77 that actual negotiations on the Agenda for Development really took off.

My delegation congratulates the Chairman of the Group of 77 for discharging admirably the task of being our lead negotiator. We also pay tribute to all who were involved in the negotiations for their creativeness and patience in working around certain complicated issues, thereby producing mutually acceptable solutions, and we are very appreciative of the support extended by the Secretariat.

We now have an Agenda for Development. This document is a testament to the fact that the United Nations is a vibrant force, directing all that we can together achieve to promote a higher quality of life for all people. This document will certainly invigorate the whole United Nations system and should accord an additional impetus to implementing the outcome of the series of United Nations conferences held in the 1990s. Henceforth, the task before the international community is to go beyond those pious statements in the Agenda for Development. We should all rise to the challenge of making the Agenda for Development a living document, translating into concrete actions those commitments embodied in the carefully and painstakingly crafted paragraphs and agreed by us all. My delegation fully supports the Agenda for Development.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): Let me begin, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, by sincerely congratulating you, Sir, and the Co-Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Development on bringing to a successful conclusion this five-year-long marathon of painstaking negotiation on the Agenda for Development. We applaud your dedication, your persistence and your staying power in overcoming the many formidable obstacles and setbacks on the road to achieving agreement on all 287 paragraphs of the draft Agenda. Indeed, many times we doubted that this milestone would ever be reached.

Indonesia has always attached great importance to the promotion of international cooperation for development and the eradication of poverty. In a similar vein, and particularly with the advent of globalization and the liberalization of the world economy, we recognize that an agenda for development is an indispensable blueprint for achieving this end. Moreover, it is also essential for asserting the central role of the United Nations system and its achievements, and, given the recognized indivisibility of peace, security and development as well as the broadening of the concept of development, the need for an agenda for development has taken on a new urgency.

The success in finalizing our negotiations on 14 June should therefore go a long way towards imparting new coherence to the United Nations development system and towards providing us with an effective, integrated approach to promoting international cooperation for development.

Moreover, as we are now on the verge of a new millennium, we sincerely hope that the implementation of the Agenda will not only help to reinforce the importance of development in the United Nations system but will also ensure that development is never again allowed to be marginalized or ignored.

While we celebrate the fact of reaching this truly important benchmark in the history of United Nations efforts in the field of development, it is the next stage — that of implementing the provisions of the Agenda — that could now present us with new, Herculean tasks. Indeed, without effective implementation, our long and arduous effort, spread out over half a decade, could very well go for nought and the documents so diligently negotiated become *lettre morte*.

So let us sincerely work towards ensuring that the positive and constructive spirit of partnership which enabled us to bring the negotiations on the Agenda to a successful conclusion will once again serve us well during this important follow-up of the implementation phase.

In paragraph 283 on the implementation of the Agenda, it is stated that the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through partnership should serve as an important mechanism for an intergovernmental follow-up,

assessment and implementation of the Agenda. In this context, we sincerely believe that there can be no alternative to embarking on a constructive dialogue that is essentially based on the imperative of mutual interest and benefit, genuine interdependence, shared responsibility and partnership. It is only through such a dialogue that we can successfully and expeditiously pursue the implementation of the Agenda. Indeed, while it is true that renewal of the dialogue would serve as a critical instrument for implementing the Agenda for Development, it is also true that the Agenda itself could greatly help to provide a supportive framework for actively conducting the dialogue in the United Nations system.

In conclusion, we now look forward to the high-level dialogue, which, as noted in resolution 51/174, will be held for a period of two days during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly. During that meeting, the outcome of the implementation of the Agenda for Development will be focused upon. We hope that the preparation for this discussion will be urgently undertaken as soon as possible, and we sincerely urge all Member States actively to participate in this first critical, high-level dialogue on the Agenda's implementation.

Mr. Pal (India): My delegation joins earlier speakers in expressing our appreciation to you, Sir, to the Co-Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group on an Agenda for Development and to their predecessors, whose devotion and hard work were crucial elements in the conclusion of this Agenda. I should also like to place on record our appreciation for the contributions made by all delegations during the long and sometimes arduous process of the negotiations.

Globalization, with enhanced communications and information flows, increased mobility of capital, trade and technology, has produced new avenues for sustained economic growth. At the same time, it has clearly been accompanied by intensified poverty, unemployment and, consequent to these, social problems. Economic growth by itself has not meant much to vast sections who live in poverty, without shelter, in hunger and deprivation. The challenge is to change the very concept of growth and development. We have to work for the upliftment of our people in the largest sense and to eliminate poverty and the misery and indignity associated with it.

India was happy to see the international community focusing its energies on these crucial issues at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. The common minimum programme of the Government of India foresees the formulation of development strategies on the premise that economic and social policies, and indeed all policies, must subserve the primacy of the human being and in particular the poorest among them. All people should have a share in the dividends of economic prosperity. Weaker sections cannot be mere spectators to the enjoyment of the fruits of progress only by those who are already more advantageously placed.

It is clear that market forces and growth alone may not be adequate and an interventionist approach to guarantee social justice is important. Any model of development based on uneven rewards will not be supported by those who are not beneficiaries of the growth strategy. Historically, this has always led to stress on the social fabric.

The credibility of any growth strategy has to be based on the full participation by all members of society in its formulation, implementation and in the benefits it brings. To face these challenges, we should not merely react but develop the necessary concepts, strategies and initiatives that will enable us to exert a direct and vigorous influence on the shaping of the world of the future.

The development I mentioned and the needs, priorities, capacities and potential of developing countries should be at the centre of any global vision for the coming decades. What is of prime importance is to have a clear vision and the commitment to implement it through intensified dialogue and interaction in a spirit of shared partnership and cooperation. Without this, the processes of globalization and deregulation and the prosperity, stability and security that they are expected to usher in will neither materialize nor be sustained.

Growth with equity, economic development with social justice and, in the final analysis, the creation of a world where there is less injustice and greater happiness is of the greatest importance. We trust that the adoption of the Agenda for Development and its full implementation will lead to the creation of such a world.

Mr. Insanally (Guyana): It is a great tribute to you, Sir, to our two Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, and also to the spirit of cooperation and compromise which generally existed among participants of the Working Group that we have now concluded our work on an agenda for development. The undefined has now become defined, and we now have a document

which provides a framework for international economic cooperation among Member States of the United Nations for the rest of this century and, hopefully, beyond.

When we embarked upon the elaboration of the Agenda some four years ago, little did we know where our efforts would lead. Some will recall that the first report of the then-Secretary-General generated a feeling that the exercise needed to be less analytic and more action-oriented, and, if truth be told, there was also the view that by comparison with the Agenda for Peace, which was born of the high parentage of the Security Council, an agenda for development was destined to become a poor orphan, deprived of any real sustenance. It will be remembered that then the Assembly intervened, asking the Economic and Social Council and myself, as President of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, to submit additional views for incorporation in a further report by the Secretary-General.

The hearings of development which were held in June 1994 provided a rich palette of proposals on what development was about and what the role of the United Nations should be in a changing world. There was a notable perception among most participants, who came from all corners of the Earth, that present arrangements were far from being adequate and such was the frustration of some that they called for a complete overhaul of the United Nations system.

Mere tinkering with the Organization was not considered an option. There were thus urgent calls for a new body, perhaps an economic and security council or some high-level development council that would match the Security Council in power and prestige. And equally important, there were pleas for a new partnership between developed and developing countries based on the twin pillars of interdependence and mutual benefit.

Sad to say, however, we must all recognize that the fervour which was generated then diminished with time. We reverted to the confrontation of the committee rooms and to the intense bargaining which is so peculiar to the negotiation of international agreements in this house.

Yet it must be recognized that representatives in the Group spared neither time nor energy in exploring the outer limits of agreement. To them and the co-Chairmen who have spearheaded our discussions over these many long months goes the credit for forging the document we have today. As always, the Secretariat played an invaluable role in facilitating our work, and to its hard-working officials I extend our sincere thanks. As the representative of a small developing country which tried its best to participate in the work, I would be remiss in my duty were I not to express our deep gratitude to all the Chairmen of the Group of 77 — and especially now the Ambassador of Tanzania — and to the officials who have brought us to the end of our labour.

Undoubtedly, there will be differing views on the value of this document. Many will see the glass as half full, others as half empty, continuing to believe that more could have been had. But I myself felt sincerely that the time had come when we had to ask ourselves seriously whether, as the French saying goes, the game was worth the candle. And an honest answer to that question would be to accept the fact that there was little hope on the horizon of any significant improvement in the foreseeable future. In any case, events — such as the tabling of the Secretary-General's proposals for reform on 17 July — will probably overtake some of our thinking, and it is therefore just as well that we have finalized the text for adoption now.

In conclusion, let me say, however, that our task is far from done. We must now work as an Assembly to give life to the words that have been so meticulously forged and to translate into reality the many proposals which have been advanced in service to development. Too often, as delegates in this house, we seem content with having drafted a language of agreement without much care for its subsequent implementation. The means, in fact, becomes the end. Were we to do this in this case, we would be doing an immense disservice not only to the poor and disadvantaged of the world, but to ourselves as their representatives in this Organization. Therefore, as we congratulate ourselves today in our accomplishment, I would very much hope that we will not rest until we address in detail and in reality the very urgent challenges of development which face our poor countries in the highly competitive marketplace of our global village.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): After two and a half years of painstaking negotiations, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development has finally accomplished its mission. I should like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to you, Sir, and to the two Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group for the considerable amount of work you did during the negotiation process.

Like other Member States, China has made its own contribution to the adoption of the Agenda today, which is a significant event for the United Nations system. We all remember that the General Assembly decided to elaborate an agenda for development because it wished to reverse the unhealthy trend within the Organization of placing greater emphasis on peace than on development. It also wished to bring development and peace together at the centre of the United Nations agenda, effectively to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of development, and to contribute to the advancement of international development cooperation and to the promotion of the development of all countries, especially the developing countries.

The adoption of the Agenda for Development in no way implies that these goals have been achieved; it is only the first step on the road to their attainment. Thus, while we rejoice over the adoption of the Agenda, we must keep a cool head and realize that the more important and more arduous task lies ahead: the effective implementation of the Agenda.

The Agenda for Development must be implemented in an integrated and comprehensive way. There should be no selective or one-sided interpretation and implementation at the whim of certain countries alone. In particular, attention should be paid to the means of its implementation through the effective solution of the problems of resources and technological transfer. This will require the developed countries, especially the major ones, to demonstrate true political good will and to honour their own commitments. If they do not, however well written the Agenda may be, it will be worth no more than the paper it is printed on.

We wish to cooperate closely with all countries and to translate text into reality.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) *interpretation from French*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on the important step we are about to take. My delegation remains convinced that this General Assembly would not be meeting here today to adopt the Agenda for Development without the skilful and firm determination shown by you and, of course, by your Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Michael Powles of New Zealand and Ambassador Percy Mangoaela of Lesotho.

The Assembly launched this initiative more than 50 months ago, aware that our efforts at that time to update our approaches to peace and security would be meaningless unless they went hand in hand with a similar exercise in the field of development. We thus initiated a far-reaching dialogue aimed at adapting our collective thinking about development to the realities of a rapidly changing world.

(*spoke in English*)

That dialogue has gone on longer and has at times been more difficult than, I suspect, any of us had anticipated. And the final product, being the result of significant compromise on all sides, doubtless falls short of our original expectations.

With the benefit of hindsight, we should not be surprised by our limited accomplishments. No less than in the sphere of peace and security, the consideration of our approaches to the vastly complex challenges of development must clearly be an ongoing task. Indeed, the United Nations must engage in a continuous process of recalibrating its agenda to meet constantly dynamic challenges. The Agenda for Development we are adopting today is essentially but a snapshot of that work-in-progress.

Through the historic series of recent United Nations conferences to which the Agenda for Development process has paid witness, the international community has made great strides in identifying basic priorities and imperatives for the pursuit of sustainable human development in today's world. The process of updating these priorities and assessing progress in meeting them will be taken up anew at next week's special session on Agenda 21 and in similar reviews of follow-up to Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing.

This chapter of our work-in-progress is being completed as the Secretary-General prepares to present a set of major reform measures to the Assembly next month. We hope our action today will encourage him to include significant proposals for strengthening the development operations of the United Nations. I want to assure the Secretary-General of Canada's continuing support in this undertaking, and I pledge our cooperation to all members of this Assembly as we seek to give concrete impetus to the aspirations set out in the Agenda for Development.

Mr. Gorelik (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Everyone knows the phrase, "all's well that ends well". It applies to today's events. Almost four years have passed since work began on the Agenda for Development, during which we had our ups and downs. There were times when the very fate of this document hung by a thread. But today, that is all behind us.

The United Nations was awaiting this document, and its appearance on the eve of the special session of the General Assembly on environment and development is most timely. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development is the first of the General Assembly reform groups to complete its work. Much was said during work on the Agenda about the man in the street and his possibly complicated attitude towards the Agenda for Development. Of course, we have before us a United Nations text with specific language, and to make use of it requires some special intellectual preparation.

But the main thing is that the Agenda has turned out to be a balanced document reflecting the interests of all groups of countries. It frames the decisions taken in recent years at various United Nations global forums, and does so within a broad consensus on development issues.

Much has been said in recent years about the marginalization of our world Organization, but, in our view, the adoption of the Agenda for Development may have demolished such arguments. The ideas set out in the Agenda place the United Nations at the centre of international cooperation for development.

We would like to express our gratitude for the cooperation of our negotiating partners from the North, the South, the East and the West. We thank the Chairman of the Working Group, Ambassador Razali, for his clear perseverance and his political acumen, which were of help during the delicate period when the very fate of the Agenda was under threat. We thank the former Vice-Chairmen, Ambassadors Mongbé and Osvald. Special esteem must be accorded the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, Ambassadors Mangoaela and Powles; their dedication, consistency, wisdom and optimism carried us through what were the most hopeless stages of the negotiations, thereby earning authority and the genuine respect of the participants.

I must say something also about the positive role played by the Secretariat and emphasize the professionalism, effectiveness and reliability of the staff, who embodied the high standards of United Nations staff members.

Let me say in conclusion that the adoption of the Agenda for Development has demonstrated one extremely important thing: we can reach agreements, in spite of complicated obstacles and the exigencies of group and national interests. We do not wish to idealize the Agenda, but there is a hope that the spirit of cooperation and understanding will guide us in future negotiations, because there are no opponents of development; there are only various approaches to it. We have found consensus: the Agenda for Development. Now let us try with perseverance to work in a spirit of genuine partnership in implementing this consensus.

Mr. Soal (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations.

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on this auspicious occasion: the successful conclusion of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development and on the adoption of the Agenda for Development. You have once again demonstrated your leadership qualities, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group, in ensuring that the entire United Nations membership saw and recognized the value of the successful completion of the Group's deliberations.

I would like also to congratulate your two Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Ambassador Percy Mangoaela, and the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Michael Powles. By ensuring at a working level that the Ad Hoc Working Group completed its work and adopted and approved of the outcome of its drawn-out deliberations, the two Vice-Chairmen also have rightly earned our high esteem and great admiration.

I would also like to commend the two preceding Vice-Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the former Permanent Representative of Benin, Ambassador René Valéry Mongbé, and the Permanent representative of Sweden, Ambassador Peter Osvald. Perhaps theirs was the more thankless task, but they helped to lay the necessary foundation without which the conclusion of the work of the Working Group would have been well-nigh impossible.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement that will be made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this matter.

South Africa believes that today's formal adoption of the Agenda for Development by the General Assembly represents an important milestone in the emergence and evolution of a critical global consensus on development matters in general and on the role of the United Nations

in development matters in particular. Our collective search for a meaningful and fruitful global partnership for growth and development has again been enhanced by our adoption of the Agenda for Development. That the entire membership of the United Nations could reach an agreement on a matter so complex is testimony to the ability of the entire United Nations family of nations to rise to the occasion and to allow the dynamics of consensus-building to foster global partnership.

We, the United Nations Member States and observer States, have agreed to adopt the Agenda for Development, thus holding forth a global promissory note and universal hope for the millions of our people throughout the entire world who daily go without sufficient food and water, who battle diseases and natural disasters, who cannot read or write, who lack shelter, who are jobless, whose entire lives are stunted and who are deprived of the simple pleasures of human existence because of poverty.

As South Africa embarks on its long, difficult but exciting journey from being a society based on the division and bitterness of racial inequalities, religion and gender to being a truly rainbow African nation based on the non-racist and non-sexist creed that seeks continuously and energetically to address its inherited imbalances, South Africans will look up to this Agenda for Development as a beacon of hope.

As our continent, Africa, also embarks on its momentous and promising journey into the twenty-first century, the Agenda for Development can be regarded by all Africans as a constant companion providing the capacity to triumph over adversities. Indeed the adoption of the Agenda for Development serves as a basis upon which Member States and the international community can face the challenge before us with hope and optimism.

Mr. Nishigahiro (Japan): My delegation, too, wholeheartedly welcomes the conclusion of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development. We hope that this successful result, after hard negotiations lasting for more than two years, will provide a positive impetus to the work of other working groups dealing with the reform of the United Nations. My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, and salute the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, for their tireless efforts, which have made it possible for the Group to bring its work to a successful conclusion. We also would like to express our appreciation to the former bureau members for their valuable contributions.

The conclusion of our work in the Group is certainly a milestone in the efforts of the United Nations to address the issue of development. We cannot believe, however, that the Agenda itself can be the conclusion of our work. Our efforts to address this issue, which is of the utmost importance to the United Nations in the economic and social areas, should continue to evolve and extend beyond the conclusion of the Agenda itself. The United Nations must now proceed simultaneously on two fronts.

First of all, it should move quickly to adopt a new and innovative approach to development, and then commence active efforts to implement it. A new development strategy based on global partnership, which my Government has advocated would, in our view, be most effective. Under this strategy, the international community would establish a common set of targets, and developing countries, based upon their ownership of their own development, would then establish plans for achieving them. Their subsequent efforts to implement those plans would be complemented by well-coordinated assistance from developed countries, international organizations, the private sector and civil society itself. Although the individual parts of this approach may not be entirely new, having already been adopted in various international forums and carried out by the international community, they have never been incorporated into an organic whole in the form of a comprehensive strategy; that is precisely what needs to be done.

Secondly, the United Nations should reform itself in the economic and social fields so that it may be better able to join in the serious ongoing efforts that are being made with regard to the issue of development. There will be no progress in United Nations reform without constructive dialogue between developed and developing countries. When we say "United Nations reform", the word "reform" should not be a euphemism for budget reduction. In this connection, we particularly support the inclusion of paragraph 271 in the Agenda, as it encompasses the idea of reinvesting savings from improved cost effectiveness in high-priority development programmes. Japan took the initiative in incorporating this idea into the communiqué adopted at the Group of Seven summit in Lyon last year. The idea is expected to be reaffirmed at the Denver summit of the Eight, which starts today. The Secretary-General also incorporated this idea into his reform plan announced last March, and we

look forward to receiving his specific proposals for developing it further.

In adopting the Agenda for Development, on which we have spent much time and energy, my delegation would like to emphasize the need to proceed on the two fronts to which I have just referred so that we can move beyond it. We should not be satisfied merely with the adoption of the document, which is the result of lengthy negotiation. Although the work is concluded, it has become apparent in the course of negotiations that the dialogue in which development partners engage needs to be further strengthened if we are to achieve a vision of development shared by all. Efforts still need to be made at the United Nations to define a new development strategy based on a new global partnership between developed and developing countries.

Mr. Agam (Malaysia): My delegation would like to join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, and your Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, for the successful conclusion of your work. Without a doubt, you and the two Vice-Chairmen have been the driving and motivating force of this Working Group. We would also like to express our appreciation to the previous Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group for their contributions in moving the process forward during their stewardship. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all those delegations who contributed to the work of the Working Group, as well as to the staff of the Secretariat for their tireless efforts in support of the Working Group over the years.

The adoption of the Agenda for Development is of historic importance to the international community. It has been carefully and painstakingly crafted through a process of exhaustive consultations and discussions over the last two years or more. The document embodies the hopes and aspirations of the international community, as well as the programmes of action that will guide it in the future development process. This positive outcome, which many thought was almost unthinkable only a few weeks ago, is indeed a remarkable achievement and is testimony to our common endeavours and commitments towards attaining one of the main priorities of the United Nations: that of development in all its aspects.

The adoption of the Agenda for Development is important in that it has underscored the continued relevance and pivotal role of the United Nations in development in a way which will enhance both the effectiveness of its own interventions and its ability to develop well-defined positions, contributing to improved coordination within the United Nations system. By promoting a more comprehensive and effective approach to development, and refocusing — indeed, reasserting — the centrality of the role of the United Nations, the Agenda will further the objective of greater coherence in the development activities of the United Nations as a whole.

In this context, the forging of a close relationship and cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, as highlighted in the Agenda, is of critical importance in the attainment of the overall goals, as is the need for improved coordination in the work of the agencies concerned. Of course the attainment of its goals will depend on many factors, not least of which will be the vital role and contribution of each and every Member State, both developed and developing, in the implementation of this comprehensive but realistic Agenda. Clearly, the attainment of these goals will be predicated on a mutually beneficial partnership of all Member States, particularly between those of the North and those of the South.

With this important breakthrough, it is perhaps not unrealistic to anticipate progress in the open-ended working groups on United Nations reform. It is certainly the hope of my delegation that the success of the Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Development will inspire the other open-ended working groups to try their utmost to bring their work to an early and successful conclusion, however difficult or hopeless it may appear to be at this point.

Mr. Acha (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate all those actively involved in the process that has brought about the Agenda for Development.

We should like to introduce into our debate in this room three considerations at this crucial and significant moment for the United Nations system and for the international community as a whole. First, it is in the interests of all countries, both developing and developed, for this Agenda for Development to be effectively implemented and for follow-up and periodic evaluation to take place. The implementation of such follow-up will depend on the political will of the entire international community. It will also require the broad dissemination of information about the Agenda for Development.

Secondly, we believe that the current exercise of evaluating the implementation of the Rio commitments and of subsequent development conferences requires an integrated approach. We wish to take advantage of this meeting to express our full support for the work begun by the Secretariat on the integrated follow-up of the various United Nations summit meetings. We believe that this will be a fundamental step towards the implementation, and in the process of implementation, of the Agenda for Development, which largely summarizes the principal agreements reached over the past decade in connection with United Nations development conferences.

Thirdly — and this is my last point — we would like to emphasize another key element: the system of United Nations funds and programmes. In the spirit of the Agenda for Development, these funds must operate in a coordinated way, but it would be very dangerous to try to merge them into a single fund.

In conclusion, we would like to note the interest of all the developing countries in continuing to participate in these funds and programmes, whose contribution supports precisely the overall development perspective that we all are hoping for from the Agenda.

Ms. Yoo (Republic of Korea): Allow me to begin by expressing the congratulations of my delegation to you, Sir, and to all the delegations that worked very hard to make possible the adoption of the Agenda for Development. Even though towards the end of the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development, the meetings and negotiations may have become challenging, the will and determination of all involved to reach a successful outcome never diminished.

In this regard, we pay special tribute to you, Sir, and to the two Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, for their impressive leadership and catalytic role in helping guide us towards the final text of an agenda for development, which we welcome today.

We are most pleased that agreement could finally be reached on compromise language concerning the more complicated issues under discussion, such as the definition of development and resource mobilization. We fully support this final text of the Agenda and believe that it forms an invaluable articulation of the principles which can serve to guide the United Nations role in development into the next century.

We feel confident that today's completion of the Agenda for Development will help to inject new momentum into efforts to strengthen international cooperation for development; enhance the capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system in that task; and promote an integrated approach to development.

Although the Working Group's task may now be complete, we stand committed to ensuring that the progress we have achieved can continue and that the Agenda can be faithfully implemented.

Today we mark the successful closing of one chapter in our work on development at the United Nations, but really we are also heralding a new beginning, and as we move forward in seeking further to strengthen international cooperation for development, particularly through the United Nations, I wish to assure you, Sir, that the Republic of Korea will continue to be an active and committed supporter of this effort.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of part I of document A/AC.250/1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of part I of document A/AC.250/1?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 51/240).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Palacio (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Argentina wishes to join in the congratulations expressed on the fulfilment of the task of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development and on the adoption of the Agenda for Development. In this connection, we wish to make an interpretative statement and to express reservations on the following points in the document.

First, we would like to comment on the manner in which the Agenda for Development deals with previous United Nations conferences and on the fact that it makes no mention of the reports of those conferences, given that those reports contain reservations expressed or interpretative statements made by my Government and other Governments when the reports were adopted at those conferences.

Secondly, we have an interpretation of section E of chapter II of the document. In this connection, my delegation would like to reaffirm that whatever references to population control may be found in the text that are related to sexuality, including reproductive health, should not be interpreted as restrictions on the right to life or as any waiver of the condemnation of abortion as a method of birth control or population planning. We base this statement on our national Constitution, which, in article 75, paragraph 23, refers specifically to this question of the condemnation of abortion; on article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and on paragraph 41 of the Vienna Programme of Action. None of the proposals contained in the Agenda for Development should be interpreted as justifying programmes for the sterilization of men or women as approaches to the elimination of poverty.

In conclusion, we would like this statement to be included in the official records of this meeting of the General Assembly.

Ms. Darmanin (Malta): May I join others in congratulating you and the Co-Vice-Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development, Ambassador Powles of New Zealand and Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho, on the good work undertaken in the finalization of this Agenda.

In welcoming the adoption of the Agenda for Development, the delegation of Malta would like to state its understanding that reference to the platforms and programmes of action adopted by the United Nations conferences is to be interpreted as consistent with the reports to those conferences.

Further, with respect to chapter II, section E, of the Agenda, Malta reserves its position on the use of the term "reproductive health". The Government of Malta is fully committed to the provision of reproductive health services, excluding abortion. The interpretation given by Malta to the term "reproductive health" is consistent with national legislation, which considers the termination of pregnancy through induced abortion as illegal. We would like this statement to be duly reflected in the official records of the Assembly.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): I am greatly honoured to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at this historic moment of concluding the successful process of preparing an agenda for development.

At the outset, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your initiatives and commitment, Sir, which have greatly contributed to the realization of this outcome. Your consistent and persistent encouragement and guidance facilitated and generated the much-needed political will and enthusiasm from all Member States to continue with the negotiations and discussions and eventually to attain the product which we have just adopted.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to the Co-Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group on an Agenda for Development, Ambassador Percy Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Michael Powles of New Zealand, for their outstanding work in conducting, guiding and propelling the negotiations amidst an apparent wide gap between the negotiating groups and countries. Their patience, perseverance and proposals greatly facilitated agreement and understanding between the negotiators on the most controversial issues. This successful conclusion of the process can be attributed to their enduring commitment and efforts.

We would also like to recognize the outstanding work done by the former Co-Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mongbé of Benin and Ambassador Osvald of Sweden.

The history of the task of preparing an agenda for development is well known to all of us here. Members will recall that the Group of 77 and China were the main initiators for launching the proposal and continued to be the main protagonists during the last four years. Members will also recall that the imperative was premised on the increasing realization that development was being marginalized in the mainstream and priorities of the intergovernmental processes of the United Nations system. The complementary linkage and balance between peace and development were being lost. The process of globalization was and is becoming more acute and the increasing marginalization of developing countries in the

global economy was becoming a reality, especially in the critical areas of international trade, money, finance, technology, information and communication flows.

Indeed, with all of these trends and tendencies in the world economy, it was recognized by both developed and developing countries, States Members of the United Nations, that it was imperative to launch an endeavour of charting a framework of objectives and measures for national and international actions to address development more squarely and comprehensively than any other previous initiative undertaken by the United Nations.

The outcome of that resolve, which we have just endorsed, is one of the best attempts of the States Members of the United Nations to tackle compelling and important issues in international cooperation for development in the recent past. Fundamentally, the agreed Agenda for Development provides a framework on principles, objectives, measures and actions which would guide Member States in addressing development issues at the national and international levels in a comprehensive manner and in the medium and long terms.

The package of elements contained in the document is in no way exhaustive, but in the main it incorporates many of the basic ideas and proposals that are crucial and of great concern to developing countries. First, there is a need to evolve a genuine partnership which recognizes the inequality and disadvantaged situation of the developing countries in the global economy and thus an imperative for the developed countries to have the much-needed political will to support the development efforts of developing countries through the provision of concessional financial flows, preferential treatment in market access, durable debt-relief measures, favourable terms in the transfer of technology and support for South-South cooperation.

Secondly, the functioning and operations of the United Nations system should be more efficient and effective to maximize its impact in development activities in developing countries. Towards this end, the provision of predictable resources and institutional reforms are crucial.

Thirdly, developing countries should own their development process by assuming leadership in formulating strategies and policies and in determining the priority programmes, projects and activities, with the donor community and the United Nations system playing the supportive and advisory roles through their provision of financial and technical assistance.

While we celebrate this fruitful outcome, it is befitting also to record some of the elements of disquiet, in the view of G-77 and China, which to some extent have reduced the clarity and dynamism of the document. First, the lack of explicit acknowledgement that the deficient and unpredictable provision of resources, especially external resources — in particular, ODA flows and the core resources of funds and programmes — has been and is the main constraint in dynamizing the development process of developing countries.

Secondly, there is an apparent emphasis on the idea that the United Nations system would function more efficiently and effectively, primarily, through a rigorous reform process. Furthermore, this reform process seems to target more specifically the United Nations entities which undertake tasks that are of great interest to developing countries.

Thirdly, the definition of development is much more heavily tilted towards the components of environmental protection and management. Fourthly, the commitment of developed countries to fulfilling the agreed United Nations targets, especially on resource flows, is equivocal. Fifthly, the supremacy of the General Assembly in policy guidance has not yet been ascertained with regard to its relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions. Lastly, there has been an apparent overdose on the values and norms of development, while the special and unique characteristics of a country are belittled.

Certainly, the preparatory process of the Agenda for Development has imparted very useful lessons for the future negotiations. It has provided that the more genuine emerging partnership between developed and developing countries will overcome any degree of pessimism and delusion which may surface in an unprecedented and prolonged negotiation such as this, which has taken three years. We witnessed the exercise of flexibility, pragmatism and realism from all sides. We hope that the negotiating atmosphere which we generated in charting this Agenda will continue to prevail in all the future intergovernmental processes and dialogues.

We have realized that all the major political, economic, social and cultural problems of the world can be tackled meaningfully when development is fully addressed by developed and developing countries alike, as guided by the Agenda for Development. If this Agenda is to be implemented most effectively, political commitment is the most critical requirement. Developing countries are ready and committed to implementing the Agenda fully.

in the expectation that our development partners will also play their part fully.

Before I end my remarks, allow me to congratulate also all of our development partners — the European Union, Mexico, Canada, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and others — for their untiring efforts to negotiate and propose ideas which made it possible to conclude the preparatory work and produce this document on an Agenda for Development.

I should also thank the States members of the Group of 77 and China for honouring my country with the leadership in the negotiations with our partners. Surely, without their cooperation, encouragement and understanding, the ending of the preparatory process could not be this joyous and beautiful. I thank them all.

Last but not the least, I thank the Secretariat for working very hard to facilitate the negotiations. I would like to mention in particular Mr. Johan Scholvinck and Ms. Marion Barthelemy for their tireless efforts in providing documents and clarifications. I would also like to thank the interpreters and all the staff of the Secretariat who were working behind the scenes to facilitate our task.

Mr. Biegman (Netherlands): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following associated countries align themselves with this statement: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Iceland and Liechtenstein have also aligned themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes the adoption of the Agenda for Development by the General Assembly. The European Union emphasizes the strategic importance of achieving an agreement on the Agenda, for a number of reasons. First, the Agenda, building upon the results of the major United Nations conferences, reflects in an integrated and consolidated manner development issues in a global context that has changed dramatically in recent years. Secondly, it gives guidance as to how the United Nations should adapt to this changed world. Thirdly, adopting the Agenda should contribute to a renewed commitment to international cooperation for development and to the United Nations role in this area, and should strengthen the credibility of the Organization. And finally, the agreement may have a beneficial effect on the negotiations for the upcoming special session, which might otherwise have suffered from a lack of agreement on some of the key issues on its agenda.

Whether the Agenda contains sufficient value or value-added on substance remains to be assessed. In a few instances, texts in the Agenda were already agreed upon more than a year ago, and these may have lost some of their topicality. In other cases, there were attempts to take some steps back from recent agreements. The European Union emphasizes in particular the consensus on the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights. Nevertheless, the European Union believes that, on balance, chapters I and II seem to contain a reasonably solid conceptual basis.

We had hoped that it would have been possible to inject chapter III, on institutional issues and follow-up, with more far-reaching views in order to adapt the United Nations as an organization and as an intergovernmental forum to present-day realities in the social, economic and related fields. The outcome in that respect is very modest indeed, but fortunately does not close the door on urgently needed changes for a stronger and more focused United Nations as an agent for development. The importance of the Agenda will depend on the follow-up given to its main components by the membership of the United Nations.

The European Union regrets that the process towards the Agenda has been far too lengthy. At its closure, we are, however, satisfied that it has finally been possible to bring this process to a positive end. On behalf of the European Union, I would like to express our thanks and admiration first to you, Mr. President, for energizing the work of the Working Group when needed, then especially to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, as well as to their predecessors, Ambassador Mongbé of Benin and Ambassador Osvald of Sweden, for the way in which they conducted the negotiations. Equally, we applaud the tireless efforts of the Secretariat and the very high quality of its support. And finally, we express our appreciation to those countries which have consistently and continuously believed in the Agenda and which helped push us towards this result.

Mr. Marrero (United States of America): The Agenda for Development symbolizes the efforts of Member States, over more than three years, to come to consensus in the General Assembly on fundamental development issues. It reflects an endeavour by all countries to focus on the need to achieve a high quality of life for all people. In so doing, the Agenda for Development carries on the themes and conclusions of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and

Development and subsequent United Nations conferences. Most important, the Agenda for Development embodies the consensus of the international community that development means sustainable development; that is, that improving the quality of life of all people, in both present and future generations, requires integrating economic development, social development and environmental protection, which, as the international community has declared and reaffirmed in various consensus documents, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. These understandings confirm that though the specific details of integrating economic, social and environmental objectives and policies may vary from country to country, we have one common paradigm, and that is sustainable development.

The United States reaffirms its commitment under Agenda 21 to the empowerment and full participation of civil society. We underline in particular the critical role of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the critical role of women in the achievement of sustainable development. We recognize in particular the contribution of local authorities to the implementation of Agenda 21 and support the promotion of local Agenda 21 initiatives. We consider these to be essential to sustainable development.

With respect to paragraph 57, the United States believes that it is essential for countries to have in place strong and effective environment laws and policies providing for high levels of protection in order to help ensure that trade liberalization contributes to sustainable development. The United States further understands the language at the end of the second sentence of paragraph 57 to mean that measures adopted for environmental purposes should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on trade.

We understand that references to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) or its role or functions are solely in the context of its established areas of activity as set forth in the instrument of the GEF.

With respect to paragraphs 194, 214 and 286, the United States wishes to reiterate the standing policy we have expressed on every occasion where we have joined consensus on similar references. The United States is not among those countries that have affirmed or undertaken an overseas development assistance target. Rather than accepting such a target, we believe it is more important to focus efforts on effectiveness and quality of aid and on the policies of the recipient country. The United States has traditionally been among the largest aid donors in volume terms and will continue to provide high-quality aid on a case-by-case basis, in a way that encourages reform efforts in developing countries.

The United States also takes note that the Agenda for Development was negotiated as a whole and reflects an overall balance. Reference to particular language of this document must retain this balance and context. This particularly applies to the interdependent elements in paragraph 1.

The consensus on the Agenda for Development could not have been achieved without the leadership of the various Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group over the years. We would like to thank especially the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Razali, and Ambassadors Mangoaela and Powles and their predecessors, Ambassadors Osvald and Mongbé, for their relentless efforts to conclude this document.

Of course, the dedication of the Secretariat through many drafts was also critical to the success of this process. Most important, we commend the cooperation and partnership between all the delegations from developing and developed countries, North, South, East and West, that forged a partnership which recognizes that, while there are differences among countries, there is a common goal to achieve sustainable development throughout the world. We are proud to have been a part of that process and to have participated in it.

Mr. Hamdan (Lebanon) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Lebanese delegation would first like to applaud our important achievement in having just adopted the Agenda for Development after almost three years of discussion. We would like to join earlier speakers in paying tribute to you, Mr. President, to the two Vice-Chairmen, and to all those whose efforts led to this achievement. We support the statement made earlier by the spokesman for the Group of 77 and China.

Paragraph 34 of the Agenda for Development refers to major conferences and meetings held by the international community over the past five years. Paragraph 35 states that all States and international organizations should fully implement the internationally agreed targets reached at those conferences. We should like to reaffirm here that those references, and similar references in paragraphs elsewhere in that document, do not annul the statements made and reservations expressed by Lebanon on those occasions. We should like to

reaffirm the fact that those declarations and reservations remain valid.

My delegation would like the text of this statement to be included in the official report of this meeting.

Mr. Eltinay (Sudan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation would like to join with previous speakers in expressing its deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the two Vice-Chairmen for your great efforts, which have led to the successful outcome of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group, in continuation of the process started by your predecessors, Mr. Amara Essy and Mr. Do Amaral, and by Ambassadors Mongbé and Osvald. I should like to explain further the position elaborated by the Ambassador of Tanzania, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Given the great importance we attach to the question of development and international cooperation, my delegation joined the consensus of the General Assembly in adopting the report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group. My delegation reaffirms its support for this report and for all the international conferences that have been held during the past five years. These constitute a new pattern of relations in the post-cold war period, and we look forward to its being continued. The right to development should be strengthened, and should not be applied on a political and selective basis. However, the report also refers to the programmes of action of the Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, and it should be understood that the reservations expressed by my delegation with regard to some of the paragraphs contained in those programmes of action, which contradict the religious values prevailing in my country, remain valid.

I hope that this statement will be reflected in the verbatim record of this meeting.

Ms. Corado (Guatemala) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to join with the other speakers who have expressed congratulations for the dedication and hard work shown by you, Mr. President, and the Co-Vice-Chairmen, the Ambassador of New Zealand and the Ambassador of Lesotho, who were pivotal to the successful outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development and to the formal adoption of the Agenda. We also congratulate Tanzania, which currently holds the chairmanship of the Group of 77, and its predecessor, Costa Rica, for their untiring work during the negotiations.

My delegation believes that the official adoption of the Agenda for Development is of great importance because it reaffirms the role that the United Nations plays in development. The Agenda is also a valuable guide to the principles that must govern the Organization in matters of development. However, we also believe that the commitments entered into at the highest level at the major United Nations conferences must be preserved and reaffirmed. That is why we wish any references to the major United Nations conferences to be in keeping with the reports that were adopted at those conferences.

We should like this statement to form part of the official record of the meeting.

Mr. Jallow (Gambia): My delegation is pleased to be associated with the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution in document A/AC.250/1 (Part I), relating to the Agenda for Development. The adoption of the draft resolution would not have been possible, Mr. President, without your wise guidance and spirited involvement in the negotiating process. You have once more demonstrated your belief that the work of the General Assembly should achieve positive results and be carried out on a timely basis. In the same vein, I would like to extend my delegation's sincere congratulations to your two able Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Mangoaela of Lesotho and Ambassador Powles of New Zealand, who worked tirelessly for long, frustrating hours to achieve consensus on the document. No doubt their hard work was inspired by the fine examples set by their predecessors, Ambassador Mongbé of Benin and Ambassador Osvald of Sweden. We also thank them for their excellent work.

Negotiations on this document over the last four years have not only been difficult and expansive in scope, but have been carried out in an atmosphere characterized by level-headedness, patience, understanding and a deep sense of commitment to the United Nations development mandate, including the commitments reached at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, and the outcome of other major United Nations conferences.

If the preparation and adoption of the document presented difficulties, its implementation will require greater effort and enduring commitment on our part. Today the international economic situation, especially within the context of liberalization and globalization, should inspire and enhance development cooperation between developing and developed countries, between

rich and poor countries, and also between big and small nations.

I therefore call on all parties to support the document and participate fully and meaningfully in the implementation of the Agenda for Development.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I wish to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Lesotho, Ambassador Percy Mangoaela, and the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Michael Powles, as Co-Vice-Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development, for successfully steering the Group to a productive outcome. Both representatives have the distinction of leading the first of the open-ended working groups of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion. Though both were new to the assignment when they assumed the post last year, they persevered and continued to engage delegations in dialogue. Their efforts are manifested in the document before us today.

I also wish to use this occasion to record our deep appreciation to the former Chairmen of the Working Group, namely, the Presidents of the forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions, and particularly the former Vice-Chairmen, namely, the Permanent Representatives of Sweden and Benin. As all members are aware, the Working Group on an Agenda for Development was established 19 December 1994 by resolution 49/126. Several representatives who helped to conceive and elaborate further the mandate of the Working Group are no longer here at the United Nations. Like us, they would have been happy with the outcome.

Credit and recognition should also be extended to the Secretariat and the officials who, together with the bureau and delegations, have toiled over the years to produce the document before us today. I also wish to convey my special thanks on this occasion to all representatives of the Open-ended Working Group for their arduous and persistent effort in concluding this work. Negotiations were tough, but eventually, over time, consensus was forged through understanding and a spirit of give and take.

The Agenda for Development is timely, as it underlines the United Nations continued catalytic role and active involvement in development matters. It serves as a welcome fillip to the special session on Agenda 21, beginning next Monday. Already the spirit of cooperation that brought about this document has influenced ongoing preparatory efforts for the special session.

Development is today the most important task facing humanity, which continues to be confronted with poverty and other forms of socio-economic problems. While some parts of the world have enjoyed economic growth and sustainable development, many have not. In the last few years, the United Nations has started a process of re-examination and redefinition of development, taking into account the progress achieved in the last half century.

In this context, the Agenda for Development is a tangible attempt to address issues and problems associated with development from a common and collective perspective of the United Nations. The United Nations has a unique opportunity to act now to operationalize the Agenda for Development. It is within the power of Member States and the rest of the global community to help ensure the success of the Agenda.

Development, while requiring international cooperation, is the responsibility of States. It can succeed only if it responds to the needs of the people and if it articulates these needs in a coherent policy framework. The complementarities between national and international contexts and connections cannot be ignored nor looked at in isolation.

Before concluding, I should like to take this opportunity to express the hope of many that the successful conclusion of the Working Group on an Agenda for Development could encourage other working groups to conclude their work successfully and soon. Success in the working groups clearly enhances the image and relevance of the United Nations in the eyes of the people of the world, for whom the United Nations was established.

I give the floor now with great pleasure to Ambassador Percy Mangoaela of Lesotho.

Mr. Mangoaela (Lesotho), Vice-Chairman, Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development: It is with a sense of unbounded pride that Lesotho has been associated with this most important task of the elaboration of an agenda for development in the character of a Co-Vice-Chairman of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development.

The Agenda has been adopted at a moment in history when we stand on the threshold of a new millennium, which threatens to dazzle us with its technological revolution. The place of small and developing countries in this landscape, in which physical barriers between and among countries are continually being blurred by globalization and information technology advances, is one fraught with uncertainties and fears of marginalization from world trade.

It is therefore gratifying to these countries to be able to draw from the Agenda for Development the conclusion that international cooperation and solidarity is still alive and well in the world. They are emboldened, as developing countries, to expect that they will be empowered by the partnership exemplified in the Agenda for Development to face this uncertain future with greater confidence.

I should like to express my most sincere gratitude to several delegations for the kind words of congratulation they expressed in connection with my small part in the success that is ours all. In my turn, Sir, I should like to thank you for the leadership that you have provided both Ambassador Powles and myself, and for your interventions at very critical stages in the process. When we were about to throw in the towel, you urged us to go on. When our own energy resources were very low, you replenished them.

I would be less than honest if I did not admit that at times, I thought "the game was not worth a candle", and yet we went on because we perceived among the partners in negotiation an accommodating approach to finding a common understanding on some of the most intractable problems and complex issues that were the substance of the negotiations.

I should like to thank in particular the Secretariat for their unstinting effort to make our task easier, from the highest level of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to the foot soldiers, the ones who stayed with us until very late hours, continually supplying us with the institutional memory which was so important to sustain the momentum.

While we express relief at having finally attained our objective of an Agenda for Development, we nevertheless do not consider it to be the end of the road. On the contrary, we consider it a platform from which will be launched several initiatives, multilateral and bilateral, to give concrete expression to the lofty ideals contained in the Agenda for Development.

The President: I now give the floor, with equal pleasure, to Ambassador Michael Powles of New Zealand.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand), Vice-Chairman, Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development: The importance of this occasion has been well attested to by you, Sir, and by the many previous speakers this morning. I have just a short footnote which I would wish to add.

Some warm words have been directed to the Vice-Chairmen and that is much appreciated. In fact, I would like to emphasize that the successful result which has been achieved by this Working Group was substantially brought about by the efforts of a small group of representatives in the Working Group itself, none of whom were ambassadors and most of whom are not sitting immediately behind their nameplates this morning. They were determined that we should not fail, and their success demonstrated how much individuals and individual effort really can make a difference in multilateral diplomacy.

I would also like to join those who have recorded their appreciation of the efforts and professional skills of the Secretariat officers assisting us. Ambassador Mangoaela referred to them as the foot soldiers of the Secretariat, and I would simply like to say that the two particular foot soldiers who were with us through our long meetings have been with this whole exercise far longer than any delegations have been. I believe that they have demonstrated the highest skills of professionalism and commitment which could be expected of international civil servants.

Finally, I would certainly hope that, while there is indeed so much more to be done in the development field, this game — to repeat the words used this morning by our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Guyana, and again a moment ago by Ambassador Mangoaela — was certainly "worth the candle".

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 96?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 96.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.